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**Contact:  
Lisa Capone  
617-626-1119  
Robert Keough  
617-626-1109  
Wendy Fox  
617-626-1453**

## **DCR ANNOUNCES REPAIRS TO BOWKER OVERPASS RAMP**

*Agency will Explore Creative Approach to Maintain Pedestrian Access during Renovations*

BOSTON – Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) Commissioner Richard K. Sullivan, Jr. today announced the agency's plans to conduct interim repairs to Bowker Overpass Ramp H beginning early this spring and continuing for 18 to 24 months. Ramp H serves as the Boylston/Beacon Streets connection to Storrow Drive Westbound.

The repairs, estimated at approximately \$5 million, will take place during the day and evening hours, with most noisy work reserved for daytime hours to minimize nighttime disturbance for area residents.

"Our first responsibility is to public safety. These repairs are necessary to keep the Bowker Overpass, Ramp H operational," Commissioner Sullivan said. "Meanwhile, we are looking ahead to more significant rehabilitation of a number of the area's bridges and roads."

The interim repairs announced today will precede more comprehensive repairs to the Bowker Overpass and other Charles River Basin structures. In partnership with Massachusetts Highway Department, the DCR plans to conduct a regional sequencing study of necessary road and bridge projects in the Charles River Basin to determine the optimal order and timing of projects to protect public safety, maintain traffic flow and manage construction impacts.

The Bowker Overpass Ramp H work is among several smaller projects the DCR is undertaking in advance of the comprehensive renovations. The project announced today includes full replacement of Ramp H's concrete and asphalt overlaid decking, as well as replacement of concrete traffic barriers, placement of new decorative lighting fixtures, and minor repairs and maintenance to the steel beams beneath the decking. In addition, deterioration in the concrete below the bridge will be addressed through removal and patching.

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS · EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF ENERGY & ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS

Department of Conservation and Recreation  
251 Causeway Street, Suite 600  
Boston MA 02114-2119  
617-626-1250 617-626-1351 Fax  
[www.mass.gov/dcr](http://www.mass.gov/dcr)



Deval L. Patrick  
Governor

Timothy P. Murray  
Lt. Governor

Ian A. Bowles, Secretary, Executive  
Office of Energy & Environmental Affairs

Richard K. Sullivan, Jr., Commissioner  
Department of Conservation & Recreation

Commissioner Sullivan also said the DCR is considering is a floating walkway to temporarily replace a recreational path that lies beneath the section of the Overpass that will be affected by the repairs. Crossing a cove in the Charles River and spanning approximately 350 feet, the universally accessible walkway would be adjacent to the existing path and remain for the duration of the project. It would provide continued pedestrian access within 50 feet of the Charles River embankment.

“We understand how important it is to ensure pedestrian and bicycle access during the rehabilitation and we are looking at an innovative way to accomplish this,” Commissioner Sullivan said.

Installation of the floating walkway would also minimize any adverse impacts to the Esplanade and the Charles River embankment.

The DCR will host a public meeting next month to inform the local community about the upcoming repairs, and field questions and concerns about the project. Traffic management plans will be formulated in consultation with the project contractor and key stakeholders.

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Note to Editors: PDF files illustrating the scope of the proposed project are available.